

The Punta Gorda Herald

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tice of borrowing the paper, and one lady said her neighbors made such a nuisance of themselves running in for the paper each week, to put a stop to it she adopted the plan of burning it just as soon as she was through reading it. A number of people the solicitor knew were not subscribers, when asked to subscribe, replied that it was needless for them to spend \$2 as they could and did borrow the paper each week from neighbors. There are a few people who cannot afford to pay for it, but as the paper only costs three and one half cents a week, it would seem that almost everyone could afford to pay the subscription price and would be ashamed to bother the neighbors about it, but it is likely that most of the people who borrow their neighbors' newspapers do not stop there. They probably run over at least once a day to use the telephone, get a cup of sugar, some coffee, three eggs or something else they are "just out of"—for the person who won't spend three and a half cents a week for the home newspaper and "sponges" it off the neighbors, must be a hopeless victim of the borrowing habit and would hardly hesitate to ask for anything in sight.

BETTER TIMES

There can be little doubt that unless some great calamity occurs, in spite of the Republican administration, we are on the way to better times; in fact, in spite of the administration, better times are here, Roger Babson, perhaps the best posted man in America on business and finance, recently prepared a chart showing that the rise and fall of prosperity is periodical, that good times and bad times alternate according to general law and that the country tends to right itself like a tossing ship.

According to this chart there should be in the near future better times for stocks and bonds. It shows that work is becoming more plentiful and unemployment decreasing, although there is far more unemployment than administration propagandists would have the country believe; railroads are being offered an increasing volume of traffic; postal receipts are increasing in every section of the country; that Great Britain's payment of her fifty million dollar interest installment on her debt to us has strengthened confidence in foreign exchange; and that favorable manufacturing conditions outnumber unfavorable conditions. The price of cotton, which is reflected in local business conditions on account of the fact that we are dependent upon cotton growers for a market for our chief product, is higher and indications are that still better prices will prevail.

Of course no one expects a repetition of the rosy days of war time. Not a citizen of this community expects or really wants anything like this. But they will welcome, and Babson says they shall soon experience better times than we have had for several years. Hard work, liberal buying and prudent spending will hasten such a time.

GIVE PEOPLE A VOICE

Let us have a national direct primary. It is time the American people and not a handful of American politicians picked and elected the president of the United States. Senator Norris has introduced a bill for the abolition of the electoral college, but if this great reform is to become effective, the Nebraska Senator must have the solid support of the people. This is one time when every man and every woman of voting age should write letters to their senators and congressmen urging them to restore to Americans their right of franchise by supporting the Norris bill.

The electoral college stands as nothing but the symbol of defiance of every principle of democracy; indeed, the whole world has wondered how such an archaic institution has been tolerated in a country supposed to have government by majority.

The proposal for direct election needs no further brief than Beckenkridge got only 12 electoral votes against 72 for the Kentuckian.

Since then the election of minority presidents has become notorious and the fact that the nominees are chosen by the bosses and that the people have little voice in the choice of their president, has been a standing indictment of the virility of the people themselves, who have simply permitted the condition to exist.

The contention that the day has passed when the electoral college dare fly in defiance of the people's vote is beside the issue. Even an honest vote is not representative, and the fact is that open disregard of the public will remains possible.

The world war has brought to the United States more than one awakening, perhaps the most notable a realization that the American people must take the government of their own country into their own hands, and by that is meant that the sixty millions of Americans resident in the small towns and on the farms are the balance of power, and should not be quelled at the behest of interests in the cities, by interests that have

political bosses hamstrung and obedient to the crack of the whip.

Country America can and must dictate the presidency of the United States. As a start to our political renaissance, the sooner we throw the electoral college into the discard the better.

CLIPPED COMMENT

Legally Expressed

A lawyer thus illustrates the language of his craft: "If a man were to give another an orange, he would simply say: 'Have an orange.' But when the transaction is intrusted to a lawyer to be put in writing he adopts this form: 'I hereby give and convey to you, all and singular, my estate and interests, right, title, claim and advantages of and in said orange, together with all its rind, juice, pulp and pips, and all rights and advantages therein, with full power to bite, cut, suck and the same eat the same or give the same away with or without the rind, skin, juice, pulp or pips, anything heretofore or hereinafter or in any other means of whatever nature or kind whatsoever to the contrary in any-wise notwithstanding.' And then another lawyer comes along and takes it away from you."—Argonaut.

Running a Newspaper

Anybody can run a newspaper. All you have to do is to buy a plant, know how to operate it from the front door to the back door. Then hustle around and get copy. First, you must get all the local and general news. You will find the local news spread about town most anywhere; and you are expected to get news which comes sticking to you. You have to buy the general, the telephone and telegraph. Then you must collect the money, pay the bills and keep everybody in a good humor. And the thing most important is never to leave out of the paper the names of the important ones, and never to put them in when they should be left out. And you will learn this trick after you have been bawled out a few times. Of course, getting the money to pay bills is the easiest job of all, almost as easy as pleasing everybody. Most of the people who know exactly how to run a newspaper and make it pay are those who have failed in the business. They are very wise. Try it. It's great fun.—Palestine (Tex.) Herald.

Tourists Really Coming?

According to the lady from Maine they are. A roadster automobile, of a well known and popular make, pulled up in front of the postoffice a day or so ago, a lady at the wheel, her companions all the way from Lewiston to the south being innumerable traveling bags, golf sticks and a trunk. Yes, she drove the entire distance alone and she told the Star-Telegram that all along the Atlantic seaboard route she had met with universal kindness and consideration. She was also enthusiastic over the road conditions, the only unpleasant memory being the "awful detour after I entered Florida across the St. Mary's river bridge." Aside from this bit of bad road, the entire pathway from Maine to Florida was almost one of roses. The fair visitor was asked if she had encountered much travel to Florida. "Have I?" she replied. "The highways are literally lined with automobiles, sometimes traveling in groups about one

hundred yards apart. Why, do you know, I was simply one unit in a great procession that is right now moving with unbroken ranks all the way from Canada to Florida." So here we have an answer to the query, "Are they coming?"—Lakeland Star-Telegram.

The Fly-By-Nights Here Again

They're in the state again, as usual—the fly-by-nights. We speak of the itinerant merchants, the vendors of things to wear, principally, who dodge license tax or pay only small pittance of what the home merchant pays into town, county and state treasuries. They enter your home, and if you buy of them you have contributed nothing to your city, but have put coin into the purses of those who pay no taxes here, no rents, or anything else—money that belongs in the home town.

And more than that, the fly-by-night passes out of your sight and is gone, and when you find the goods sold to you are no good, you have no redress. Simply played the part of the sucker once more.

The only legitimate distributor in the community is the retail merchant who remains here all through the year, pays taxes, hires home people and stands back of every article he sells you. He is your merchant, your friend, your fellow taxpayer, your neighbor.

The canvasser, the peddler or bell-ringer makes a larger profit than any retailer can take. But where can you find him when the stuff you purchase from him proves not to be as represented?

Stand by your home merchant. It will be to your profit, to the upbuilding of your community, and that means your own advantage.

The time will come when an indignant people will force the payment of state and county license taxes on these itinerants, so high that they can no longer "butt in" on the home merchant's legitimate business.—Bradentown Herald.

Call For a Convention

This declaration from the pen of that staunch old democrat, Colonel Robert W. Davis, editor of the Gainesville Sun, will strike a responsive chord in the hearts of many true democrats throughout the state—many of whom would speak out, as he truthfully observes, "if they were not afraid."

Jacksonville and Tampa are both talking about building auditoriums. Fine buildings that will hold assemblies of thousands of people. We hope they will build them and the first one built we want to see dedicated to public use by the holding of a big democratic state convention. It has been so long since the democrats of Florida got together in convention that the party throughout the state has gone all to pieces. There is no longer an acid test to determine who are democrats and who are not, at least so far as concerns state politics. The last platform we adopted contains the dead issue of the free and unlimited coinage of silver at a ratio of sixteen to one. When our primaries come off in June practically every white man in the state is a democrat. When the regular election comes off in November it is different. It is true the primary "law" undertakes to fix a test, but who cares for that? How much is it enforced?

The truth is that the primary system is bad. A poor man has no more chance in a primary than he

proverbial cat has in sheol. He hasn't got the money it requires. He hasn't got the time it requires. He cannot afford to quit his work and run all over the county or district or the state, as the case may be. Some one has to run for office who can afford to do that. The poor man cannot.

We want to see the good old convention system come back. Lots of good and loyal democrats all over Florida agree with us about this. Many of them tell us so, and many more would speak out if they were not afraid. Actually afraid. We would like, before we die, to attend

another such convention as the one in Gainesville when Governor Bloxham was nominated the first time, or the historic one in Ocala when he was nominated the second time. We would like once more to feel the thrill we felt at the Pensacola convention when Governor Perry was nominated or at Tampa when we chose Governor Henry Mitchell, or at St. Augustine when we put the banner in the hands of Governor Fleming. Those were fine old conventions when democrats from every county in Florida met together and conferred with each other for the good of the party.—Tampa Times.

Our Record

Since the doors opened this bank has stood for the best in financial matters. Its exceptional strength—its fair dealing with its patrons, and its attitude toward the public, have been factors of its growth.

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THE PUNTA GORDA COMMERCIAL CLUB
M. C. Price, Secretary
Punta Gorda

The world may owe us a living, but we've got to be darned good collectors to get it.

This would be a great world if we could put as much faith in each other as a woman puts in a safety pin.

Won't it be just a little dangerous to stock the Tampa Bay Park with squirrels at this season of the year?—Tampa Tribune. Yes, but no doubt ample warning will be given so the Tribune man can stay at a safe distance from the park.

After failing to put over the reapportionment amendment, Senator Etheredge, of DeSoto City, is now proposing another state bonding scheme for road building. That will be killed, too.—Tampa Tribune. This settles the matter, doe. The omnipotent, omnipresent, omnipresent and omnipotent Tribune has spoken.

A very courteous gentleman complains that very few people in this town seem able to say "good morning," and that when one passes them on the street and greets them with a "good morning" only about one in five makes any response; the other four passing with a stare as vacant as a wooden Indian without saying a word; and this is especially true of the women and girls. A sad lack of ordinary courtesy.

Charlotte county people understand that it is unlawful to shoot deer before December first. Highlands county papers report that, on November 20th, Sheriff Bob Hancock of that county, took a party of friends out hunting and that one of them, Jerry McLeod, editor of the Sebring White Way, killed an eight-pronged buck. Nothing was said about anyone being arrested and fined, but editors and sheriffs ought to be permitted to do as they think best for the good of the country.

Last week's Tourist News, which is the most interesting magazine of its class published in the state and is constantly being improved, contained an excellent article concerning the Tamiami trail, giving clear and accurate information as to the condition of this great project, which the Herald hopes to be able to reprint in the near future. Being a truthful writer, the author took a rap at the road between the Miakka and Punta Gorda counting especially on the road through Charlotte Harbor and the approaches to the big bridge, which he described as "a splendid piece of work." Knowledge of the condition of this road keeps thousands of people from attempting to travel it, for while it is passable, no one wants to travel over a bumpy road when there are so many good roads to travel, and they are not going to do it. Quick improvement of this road and the short road to Fort Myers is of paramount importance to Charlotte county, and it is hoped that officials and citizens will bend every effort to secure its improvement by the opening of the next winter season, at the latest.

For the past month or so the Herald has had a canvasser out soliciting subscriptions and collecting. Besides securing some subscriptions and collecting some money he has learned a number of interesting things. Among these is the fact that the Herald goes to practically every white home in the county, although the office has no record of many people who are regular readers of the paper. In going about from house to house the solicitor learned from many subscribers that their neighbors make a regular prac-